

Independence Tunnel Sees Daylight

SO close to Independence Day as makes no difference—July 30 to be exact—the L. & N.'s 450-foot tunnel near Independence, Ky., was "daylighted"—a word used in railroad circles which is possibly descriptive enough. To avoid any misconception, however, it might be said that the daylighting of a tunnel involves the removal of its overburden of rock and earth, thus creating an open cut. Actually, there is a *little more* to daylighting than that.

When the so-called "Short Line" from LaGrange to Newport, Ky., was first projected by the Louisville, Cincinnati and Lexington Railroads, following the Civil War, to provide a more direct line between Louisville and Cincinnati, there was considerable diversity of opinion as to the route to be taken. Some favored a water-level route along the Ohio River; others were for striking out boldly through the hills of Northern Kentucky so that the "Short Line" might truly live up to its name. The views of the latter eventually prevailed and it was soon found that the engineers had their work cut out for them.

The 82-mile-long project got under way in January, 1867 and was completed in the latter part of 1869. Because of the nature of the terrain, the builders

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couldn't achieve the desired "bee line"—in fact, there had to be considerable winding around through the hills and valleys. Nevertheless, a number of expensive tunnels and bridges were constructed; six of the former and 29 of the latter. One of each was built near Independence, Ky.; Bridge No. 40, which is 870 feet long and Tunnel No. 6, now no more. Northbound trains, emerging from the tunnel, just daylighted, immediately roll out onto the bridge, which spans Bank Lick Creek.

The increasing importance of piggy-backing and the need for using bigger rolling stock primarily dictated the daylighting of Tunnel No. 6, along with a desire to reduce maintenance costs. Work was begun by the Railroad's own forces and those of the grading contractor, the Codell Construction Company, this spring. The daylighting involved the building of a 1,100-foot long temporary track, as well as the removal of approximately 222,000 cubic yards of earth and rock.

As may be seen from the accompanying picture of the finished job, with the southbound Dixie Jet rolling through, there is now plenty of room for hauling the largest shipments.